# THE MONSTER OF SINFUL *SELF-SEEKING*, ANATOMIZED.

*TOGETHER WITH*

## A deſcription of the Heavenly and Bleſſed SELFE-SEEKING.

## In a SERMON Preached at *Pauls* the 10. of *December*, 1654.

By EDM: CALAMY, B. D. and Paſtor of *Aldermanbury*, *London*.

1 COR. 10. 24.

*Let no man ſeek his owne, but every man anothers wealth.*

1 COR. 13. 5.

*Charity ſeeketh not her owne.*

ROM. 15. 2, 3.

*Let every one pleaſe his neighbour, for his good to edification: For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelfe.*

*Qui neglectâ proximorum curâ, ſui tantùm amator eſt, id aſſequitur, ut ne ſeipſum quidem verè amet; Quemadmodum enim in membris, unius detrimentum ad alia quoque membra pervadit, & in ædificiis, unius partis ruina, ad alias extenditur: ſic & in Eccleſiâ, qui fratrem ſuum negligit, ſe ſeque tantummodo, & ſuam procurat utilitatem, ſibi etiam ipſi vel invitus damno eſt. Nam qui in rebus neceſſariis, periclitantem vidit fratrem, manumq; non porrigit, in gehennam mittitur, majori detrimento, quam erat illud quo frater afficiebatur, &c.* Theophyl.

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PACK *Mayor.*

*A ſpeciall Court holden on Tueſday the* 19. *day of* December, 1654.

ORdered that Mr. *Calamy* be deſired from this Court, to print his laſt Sermon at *Pauls.*

SADLER.

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# TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, CHRISTOPHER PACK, Lord Major, AND The Right VVorshipfull Aldermen of the famous City of *London*.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

THis ensuing Sermon *was* ordered *by you to be printed, it hath* stuck *long in the* birth, *by reason of multitude of intervening impediments: Now at last it is* come into the world, *and is here humbly presented to you, as an expression of that* respect *and* service *which I* acknowledge *to be* due, *and shall ever be ready to* pay. *The subject matter of it is to discover and Anatomize that ugly and deformed* Monster *of* sinfull selfe-seeking, *and to shew the sinfulnesse and cursednesse of it. There are two Cities (saith* Austin) The City of God, *and the* City of the Devill: *The* City of God *is* begun and built up by the love of God, and increaseth, even to the hatred of our selves; *but the* City of the Devill, begins from the love of our selves, and increaseth, even to the hatred of God, by the contempt of our brethren; for he that hateth and contemneth his brother, will in a little while hate and contemne God. *It cannot be denied, (no not by one made up of Charity) that there are many* Citizens *of this* City of the Devill. *Many who instead of loving* God, *to the* contempt of themselves, *love* themselves *to the* contempt of God:

*Civitas Dei incipit et construitur ex amore Dei, et crescit ad odium suipsius. Civitas vero Diaboli incipit ab amore sui, et crescit usque ad odium Dei per contemptum proximorum. Qui enim proximum odit, et contemnit, non etiam Deum odio habebit, et contemnit.* Aug de Civ. Dei, lib. 1.

God: *Many who seek their* owne, *and not the things of* Jesus Christ', *or which is as bad, if not worse, who seek their* owne, *under the* hpocriticall pretence *of seeking the things of Christ. It is reported of* Cnidius *a great* Architectist, *who building a* sumptuous Watch-Tower *for the* King of Egypt *(to discover the dangerous rocks by night to his Marriners) caused his owne name to be* engrav'd *upon a* stone *in the wall in* great letters, *and afterwards* covered it with Lime and Morter, *and upon the outside wrote the name of the* King of Egypt in Golden Characters, *as pretending that all was done for his glory and honour: But herein was his cunning, he knew that the water in a little time would consume the plaistering (as it did) and then his name and memory should abide & continue to after-Generations. There are many such in this Nation, who in their* outward discourse and carriage, *pretend to seek onely the* glory of God, *the* good of his Church, *and* the happinesse of the State. *But if we had a window to look into their hearts, we should finde nothing there written, but* selfe-love and selfe-seeking. *My care hath been in the following discourse, to set out the greatnesse and grievousnesse of this sinne, and how destructive it is both to Church and Common-wealth. Besides what is there said, give me leave to adde:*

1. *That it is one of the greatest curses under Heaven, for* God to give a man over to his owne hearts lust, *to* doe whatsoever seems good in his owne eyes, *to make* himselfe *the* principle, rule, and end *of all his actions. Better be given over*
1 Cor. 5. 5. *to the* Devill, *then* to our selves. *I read of one given over to Satan* for his Salvation, *but never of any given over to himselfe, but for his ruine and destruction.*

2. *That this sinfull selfe-seeking is not onely a sinne that*
2 Tim. 3. 2. *makes the* times perillous, *but* our condition damnable. *It shuts the man who is guilty of it unavoidably out of Heaven. When he dyes his Motto may be,*

Here lies a Man-pleaser, and a selfe-pleaser, but not a God-pleaser, who sought himselfe while he lived, and lost himselfe when he died. Who loved himselfe for a minute, and hated himselfe to all eternity.

*Or thus,*

Here lies a man who lived in eaſe while he lived, and now lives in eaſeleſſe torments: Who by over-pampering his body, deſtroyed his Soule: Who lived undeſired, and dyed unlamented, who lived to himſelfe, and thereby undid himſelfe.

*The* Lord preſerve you *from this ſinne, and make you true Common-wealth (not private-wealth) men. It* becomes him, *(ſaith a wiſe Heathen)* who would be a great man to love neither himſelfe, nor any thing that is his, but juſt things, whether done by himſelfe, or by another.

*Decet ſanè eum qui magnus vir futurus eſt, neq; ſeipſum, neque ſua diligere; ſed juſta ſemper ſive ab ipſo, ſive ab alio geruntur.*

*I have made bold to adde a few lines to that diſcourſe which I had before you concerning the* bleſſed and heavenly ſelf-ſeeking, *wherein I ſhew, That a* ſelfe-denying, ſelfe-examining, ſelfe-judging Chriſtian, *is the* trueſt ſelfe-ſeeker. *That he that preferres the* keeping *of a* good Conſcience *before the* keeping of his Eſtate, or Life, *the good of* Church and State *before his* own good, *is a* bleſſed ſelfe ſeeker. *He that loves* himſelfe *and not* God, *loves not* himſelfe, *and he that loves* God *and* not himſelfe, *loves himſelfe; according to that excellent ſaying of Auſt.* Neſcio quo inexplicabili modo, &c. I know not by what unexpreſſable way, but ſure I am of this truth, That he that loves himſelfe, and not God, loves not himſelfe; and he that loves God, and not himſelfe, he loves himſelfe. For he that cannot live of himſelfe, dies preſently by loving himſelfe; but when he is loved from whom, and by whom we live, in not loving himſelfe, he loves himſelfe the more, becauſe therefore he loves not himſelfe, that he might love him by whom he lives.

*Neſcio quo inexplicabili modo quiſquis ſeipſum, non Deum amat, non ſe amat, & quiſquis Deum, non ſeipſum amat, ipſe ſe amat. Qui enim non poteſt vivere, de ſe, moritur utique amando ſe: cum verò ille diligitur de quo vivitur, non ſe diligendo magis diligit, qui properat ſe non diligit, ut eum diligat de quo vivit.* Aug. de Tract. 123 in Joannem.

*The* Lord *make you ſuch* ſelfe-ſeekers: *Such a one was* Nehemiah, *of whom it is ſaid, that he ſought not* his owne, but the welfare of the people of God; *Such another was* David, *who* preferred Jeruſalem before his chiefe joy: *Such were Old* Ely,

Neh. 2. 10.

Pſal. 137. 6.

Ely, Ezra, Jeremiah, Daniel, &c. *Such ought you to be.*

*It is not long since you kept a* Fast, *to humble your selves before the Lord, in reference to the many sad, lamentable, and unusual* Fires *kindled amongst us. Now it ought to be your care* (*as the true fruit of this* Fast) *not onely in your* personall capacities *to abstaine from, but as you are* publique Magistrates *of this City, to indeavour* (*so far as your power will reach*) *to suppresse all those sins for which* God *hath threatned this great Judgement. This is a divine, blessed, and most heavenly self-seeking.* God *hath threatned to destroy a Nation by fire,*

1. *For* Sabbath breaking, *Jer.* 17.27.

2. *For* despising *and* misusing the godly Ministry, 2 *Chron.* 36.16.19.

3. *For* assuming the Office of the Ministry without a lawfull call. *Numb.* 16.16,17,18,35.

4. *For* worshipping God after a false manner, *Lev.* 10.1.2.

5. *For* breaking the Brotherly Covenant, *Amos.* 1.9,10.

6. *For* pride, Idlenesse, fulnesse of bread, uncharitableness, *for* giving our selves over to Fornication, and going after strange flesh, *which were the sins of* Sodom (*Ezek.* 16.49. *compared with* Jude 7.) *and for which* God *raigned* fire and brimstome from heaven for their destruction.

*The* Lord cloath *you with* zeale *as with a* Garment, *and inable you to be instrumentall to* quench the burnings which these sins have kindled, *and to make this famous City* a habitation of Justice, and a Mountaine of holyness, *Jer.* 31.23. *That the name of it, from this day may be,* The Lord is there, *Ezek.* 48. 35. *So prayeth*

Your Servant in the

work of the Lord,

*Edm: Calamy.*

PHIL. 2. 21.

*For all ſeek their owne, not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts.*

THeſe words may very fitly be called *Paul's complaint*, or *black bill of indictment* drawn up againſt the Times in which he lived.

There are 4 things that make this complaint very remarkable:

1. Becauſe it is not made out of *Paſſion*, *Faction*, or any *private diſcontent*; but by a holy Man of God, as he was guided by the Holy Ghoſt: And therefore it is a *true*, and a *moſt juſt complaint*.

2. It is not ſpoken of the *Heathens*, who knew not *Chriſt*, (for it is no wonder for them that knew not Chriſt, not to ſeek the things of Chriſt) nor of *Apoſtate Chriſtians* that had totally forſaken Chriſt; but (as *Calvin* and *Beſius* obſerve) of *Brethren and Fellow-labourers*, of ſuch Chriſtians, that were not onely baptized into the name of Chriſt, but alſo profeſſed a great deale of Love outwardly to Chriſt and his cauſe, and yet it is ſaid even of thoſe, *That they ſought their owne, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt*. And therefore it is not onely a *true* and a *juſt*, but a *great, moſt ſad and heavy charge*.

*Non loquitur de ils qui planè abjecerant ſtudium pietatis, ſed de ipſis, quos pro fratribus habebat, in quos ferebat in ſuo connubernio. Illos tamen ita calore dicitur rebus ſuis curandis ut ſint ad opus Domini frigidiores.* Calv. in loc.

*De Chriſtianis & Miniſtris Apoſtolo Sermo eſt.* Bez. in loc.

3. It is not drawn up by way of *prediction*, what ſhould happen in the laſt and worſt times of the world, but by way of *Declaration*, what was practiſed in the Apoſtles dayes when the *Church* of Chriſt was a *Virgin-Church*, flouriſhing in all its beauty and glory, whileſt the *blood of Chriſt was yet warm*, and Chriſtians by this warm blood were ſodered together in Love and Unity, whileſt it was the *golden* age of

the Church, even in the Apostles dayes, *All men sought their owne, and not the things of Jesus Christ.* Had these words been a Prophecy of our times, which are the *last* and *worst times*, the *last age* of the Church, in which it is crumbled into a thousand fractions, it had been no wonder; but to charge them upon the *Primitive Apostolicall times*, that in the infancy of Christianity, *all men should seek their owne, and not the things of Christ*, this makes the complaint not onely *very true*, and *very heinous*, but also *very strange and wonderfull.*

4. The charge it selfe in its owne nature, is higher than any other in all Saint *Pauls* Epistles, and (if I be not mistaken) I may truly call it, the *blackest bill of indictment*, that was ever drawne up against the pure primitive Apostolicall age; which that we may the better understand, we must consider,

1. The heinousnesse of the offence.
2. The multitude of the persons offending.

*Their own, what?*

1. The offence is both *Affirmative* and *Negative*: 1. *Affirmative*, *All men seek their owne. Their owne honour and advancement*; Not the *honour* of *Christ*, but their *owne* honour, their *owne private gaine and advantage*; not the profit of Religion, but their *owne* profit; their *owne delights, pleasures, and recreations*; their *owne* ease, safety and security, not the safety of the *Gospel*, but their *owne* safety; their *owne* wills, lusts, and carnall contentments. Not to please Christ and doe his will, but to doe their *owne* wills, and to please themselves. And to speak according to the language of our times, *Their owne private, carnall, and Creature-interest.*

Quest. *But why are these things called their* own?

*Answ.* Not because they are so properly, for there is nothing truly *ours* but our *sinnes.* Our health, wealth, riches and honours are not ours, but Gods, *Hag.* 2. 8. *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, &c. Hos.* 2. 9. *My wood and my flax, &c.* We are but *Stewards* of these things, and *Stewards* at the will and pleasure of the Lord. That is properly called *our own*, which we may keep as long as we please, and doe with it what we please, but we cannot doe so with our health, riches and honours, &c. *For riches have wings and fly away from us* whether we will or no, and so have honours, and

and health,& therefore cannot be ſaid to be our *own properly*, neither may we uſe them as we pleaſe, but according as God hath preſcribed, therefore they are called *another mans*, and not *our owne*. *Luk.* 16.12. We our ſelves are not our owne, 1 *Cor.*6.19. *You are not your owne* much leſſe are theſe bodily comforts our own, but they are here ſo called, becauſe men have a civill title to them, and becauſe in the opinion of the world, they are their owne.

This is the poſitive and affirmative part of the offence, and it is of an high nature. For a Chriſtian that believes the immortality of his Soule, to ſeek his owne bodily promotion and intereſt, and to neglect the profit and comfort of his eternall Soule: For a Chriſtian that is elected and called to things heavenly and everlaſting, to ſeek onely after things earthly, and temporary, this is a ſinne of the ſuperlative degree.

And it will appeare the greater, if we conſider,

2. The Negative branch of the offence, *And not the things of Jeſus Chriſt*. The things of Jeſus Chriſt are the things of the Church of Chriſt, which are therefore called the things of Chriſt,

1. Becauſe *Chriſt* is the *Husband* of the *Church*, and the things of the *wife* are the things of her *husband*.

2. Becauſe *Chriſt* hath *purchaſed* them for us by his Death and Paſſion.

3. Becauſe of the great *love* that *Chriſt* hath to his *Church*, which is ſo great, as that the Churches *intereſt* is his *intereſt*, and her *injuries* his *injuries*, *Act.* 9.4.

3. They that neglect the things of the Church, neglect the things of Chriſt.

Q. *But what are the things of Jeſus Chriſt?*

A. In generall, they are nothing elſe but the *preſervation* and *propagation* of the Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt. The building up of the Church of Chriſt in *verity*, *purity*, and *unity*.

But more particularly, the things of Chriſt are,

1. The pure *worſhip* of Jeſus Chriſt, the Preaching of the Word, and adminiſtration of the Sacraments in Chriſts way.

2. The precious *truths* of the Goſpel.

3. The *government* of the Church according to Scripture-patterne.

4. The *day of Chriſt*.
5. The godly *Ambaſſadors* of Chriſt.
6. The Reformation of the Church, when corrupted in Doctrine, Worſhip, and Diſcipline.

Now then the charge is, That the Chriſtians in the Primitive times (both Miniſters and others) did ſeek their own intereſt, and not the intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt; to build their own houſes, and not the houſes of God; to ingroſſe a Kingdome to themſelves, and not to propagate Chriſts Kingdome.

Q. *Did theſe Primitive Chriſtians not at all ſeek the things of Chriſt?*

*A.* This word *Not* is not to be taken poſitively, but (as *Calvin* ſaith) comparatively. Wee muſt not ſuppoſe that Church-officers and Church-members did abſolutely throw away all care of Chriſt, and the Churches of Chriſt; but the meaning is, that they did not ſeek the things of Chriſt cordially, ſincerely, zealouſly, and primarily. They ſought them in the leaſt place, and in the laſt place. They pretended to ſeek the things of Chriſt, but ſought their own things, under colour of ſeeking the things of Chriſt, and therefore are ſaid not to ſeek them at all.

*Non ita accipiendum quaſi ſuis tantum commodis intenti nullam prorſus Eccleſiæ curam haberunt, ſed quod impliciti privatis commodis ad publicum Eccleſiæ bonum promovendum negligentiores erant.* Calv. in loc.

The charge will be yet greater, if we conſider,

2. The multitude of the perſons offending: The text ſaith, *All men*.

Q. *Was there no man in the Apoſtles dayes that ſought the good of the Church of Chriſt?*

*A.* The word *All* is not here to be taken collectively, but diſtributively; not for every one of all ſorts, but for all ſorts; not for all men properly, but for *many*, as it is taken 1 *Cor.* 10. 33. or for the moſt of men, as it is 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. All men forſake me, &c. that is, moſt men. Thus *Calvin*, *Quod omnes dicit, non urgenda eſt particula univerſalis, ut nullam exceptionem admittat, erant enim alii quoq; qualis Epaphroditus, ſed pauci: Verum omnibus tribuit quod paſſim erat vulgare.*

The full meaning then of the text is this, That even in the *Apoſtles dayes*, *In aureo illo ſæculo, in quo omnes virtutes efflore-*

*Calvin.*

*effloruerunt*, in that golden age, in which all vertues did flouriſh, there were many, and very many *Church-members* and *Church-officers* that profeſſed outwardly a great deale of love to Chriſt & his Church, and yet notwithſtanding ſought their owne eaſe, quiet, honour, and profit, more than the preſervation and propagation of the Kingdome of Chriſt; their owne private gaine and intereſt before, and more than the intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt.

The words thus expounded, are a perfect repreſentation of the times in which we now live. Methinks I can hardly ſee a man in place and power, but I can ſee it written upon his forehead in *great Characters*, this man ſeeks himſelfe and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt. If I had a window to look into the hearts of all here preſent, I feare me I ſhould finde many *ſelfe-ſeekers*, but few *Chriſt-ſeekers*, ſo that this text may fitly be called, *Englands looking-glaſſe*: wherein we may behold,

1. *The great ſinne of England*, I may truly ſay the ſinne, that is the *Father and Mother* of all her other ſinnes, the *Metropolis* of all ſinne, and that is, *Her ſeeking her owne things, and not the things of Ieſus Chriſt.*

2. The great and chiefe cauſe of all the miſeries and calamities that have hapned to this nation. The Source and Originall of all our unhappineſſe, *Becauſe all men ſeek themſelves, and no man the things of Chriſt.*

3. The onely way and remedy to be freed from all our miſeries and afflictions, and that is, by walking quite contrary to the text. By ſeeking the *things of Ieſus Chriſt, before our owne things, and more then our owne things*, and by ſeeking them heartily, throughly, zealouſly and ſincerely; this is the only *balme to cure Englands ſoars*, the *onely England-preſerving mercy*. For theſe three ends and purpoſes, I have choſen this text; The Doctrine I ſhall inſiſt upon is,

Doct. *That amongſt the multitude of Chriſtians, who profeſſe love to Chriſt and his Church, there are many ſelfe-ſeekers, but few Chriſt-ſeekers.* Or thus,

That it is an antient, common, grievous and hidden iniquity, for a Chriſtian profeſſing love to Chriſt, to be a ſelfe-ſeeker, and not a Chriſt-ſeeker.

1. It is an *old and antient ſinne*, as old as the Primitive times. A ſinne of 1600. years ſtanding.

2. It is a *generall and Land overſpreading ſinne*. A ſin that hath ſeized upon men of all ſorts, upon Miniſters, Magiſtrates, Maſters and Parents. An Epidemicall diſeaſe.

3. It is a great and grievous ſinne, a Soule-deſtroying, a Church and State-deſtroying ſinne.

4. It is a *ſecret and hidden ſinne*, a ſinne that moſt are guilty of, and yet few will confeſſe their guiltineſſe. There is no ſin hath more *Fig-leaves* to hide it, more *excuſes* to extenuate it, more cloaks to cover it, than this ſinne.

That I may the better *uncaſe and uncloath* this great tranſgreſſion, I ſhall briefly anſwer to theſe 4. queſtions,

Qu. 1. *Whether all ſelfe-ſeeking, be diametrically oppoſite to Chriſt-ſeeking?*

Qu. 2. *What is that ſelfe-ſeeking, which is inconſiſtent with Chriſt-ſeeking?*

Qu. 3. *What is the reaſon that amongſt ſuch a multitude of Chriſtians, there ſhould be ſo many ſelfe-ſeekers, and ſo few Chriſt-ſeekers?*

Qu. 4 *Wherein the grievouſneſſe, and miſchievouſneſſe of this ſinne conſiſteth?*

Qu. 1. *Whether all ſelfe-ſeeking be contradictory to Chriſt-ſeeking? Whether a man may not be a Chriſt-ſeeker, and yet a ſelfe-ſeeker?*

*Anſ* For anſwer to this you muſt know, that it is not ſimply and abſolutely unlawfull for a man to *ſeek himſelfe*, no more than it is to *love himſelfe*. Religion doth not *deſtroy* naturall affections, but onely *regulates* them, and *ſanctifieth* them; *Gratia non extinguit ſed ordinat affectiones*, ſaith Aquinas, *Non tollit ſed attollit naturam*, Grace doth not *deſtroy*, but *elevate* nature. It doth not dry up the *ſtream* of *ſelfe-ſeeking*, but onely *turnes* it into the *right channell*. *Religion* doth not *pluck* up, but *weed* the garden of Nature. As *Muſitians* when their inſtruments are out of tune, will not break but tune them. So *Religion* doth not *aboliſh*, but onely *tune* and *order* our *ſelfe-ſeeking*.

Therefore you ſhall finde in Scripture, that there are many argument

arguments drawne from *ſelfe-love*, and *ſelfe-ſeeking*, to perſwade us to holineſſe, and diſſwade us from ſin, *Deut.* 28. *Lev.* 26. *Deut.* 32.46,47. *Iſ.* 1.19. *Rom.* 2.7, 8. *Rom.* 8.13. *Gal.* 6.8. The *Scripture* gives us leave to love our ſelves, and to ſeek our ſelves, ſo it be in a right manner. *Moſes* did not ſin in *having an eye to the recompence of reward.* Nor did the *Martyrs* who could not *accept deliverance, that they might obtaine a better reſurrection*, Heb. 11.35. *who received joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in Heaven a better, and an enduring ſubſtance*, Heb. 10.34. It is ſaid, even of Chriſt himſelfe, *That for the joy that was ſet before him, he indured the croſſe, and deſpiſed the ſhame*, &c. *Heb.* 12.2. There is a great difference between *amor mercenarius*, and *amor mercedis*, *Mercenary* love, and the *love* of the *reward. Mercenary* love is, when we *ſerve God onely for reward.* This is ſinfull, but to make the *hope* of reward *one motive* of ſervice, is not only *lawful*, but *neceſſary*. For it is our duty to uſe all *Gods Motives*, as well as all *Gods Ordinances*, and as it is a ſinne for any man to ſay, that he hath no need of Gòſpel-Ordinances, ſo alſo to ſay that he hath no need of Goſpel-motives, amongſt which, this is one of the chiefeſt.

Know therefore that there is a threefold ſelfe-ſeeking.

1. There is a lawfull and an allowed ſelfe-ſeeking.

2. There is not onely a lawfull, but a heavenly and bleſſed ſelfe-ſeeking.

3. There is a ſinfull, curſed, and Diabolicall ſelfe-ſeeking.

1. There is a *lawfull ſelfe-ſeeking*, and that is, when a Chriſtian ſeeks his owne private gaine and honour in the *laſt place*, and in the *leaſt place*, when he ſeeks the *things of Chriſt*, in the *firſt* and *chiefe* place, and his owne things leſſer, and after the things of Chriſt, when he ſeeks his owne things, not in *ſeparation* from, *oppoſition* to, *competition* with, but in ſubordination to the things of Chriſt. In a word, when a Chriſtian ſeeks his own things in *due order* and *meaſure*, ſo as not to hinder, but to further his ſeeking the things of Chriſt, this is a lawfull ſelfe-ſeeking.

2. There is not onely a *lawfull*, but a moſt *Divine Angelicall*

*licall, heavenly, and bleſſed ſelfe-ſeeking.* Here I ſhall hold forth this Scripture Paradox, *That no man can be truly ſaid to ſeek himſelfe, that doth not ſeek the things of Chriſt.* That *the more we ſeek the things of Chriſt, the more we ſeek our ſelves.* That *he that ſeeks not the things of Chriſt, doth not ſeek himſelfe, but deſtroy himſelfe.* That *a Chriſt-ſeeker*, and a *true ſelf-ſeeker are termes convertible.*

Qu. *What is this heavenly and bleſſed ſelfe-ſeeking?*

*Anſ.* To underſtand this aright, is a point of great concernment. For the more we know of this *Divine ſelfe-ſeeking*, the more we will ſhun and abhor the *ſinfull ſelf-ſeeking*. Give me leave to deliver what I have to ſay about it, in theſe enſuing Propoſitions, which I doe not name as ſeveral diſtinct heads, but as divers inſtances of a divine and ſublimated ſelfe-ſeeking, (amounting moſt of them, to one and the ſame purpoſe.)

*Prop.* 1. *That man who ſeeks the good of his Soule, more than the good of his body, ſeeks himſelfe after a Divine manner.* The Body of Man is the worſt halfe of Man, *viliſſima pars hominis*, The ſhell, the boxe, the carcaſſe of Man. *Intus eſt, quod homo eſt*, The Soule of Man is the Man of Man. *Animus uniuſcujuſque is eſt quiſque.* And therefore he that ſeeks to get his Soule *beautified* with *grace*, to be made *Chriſts picture*, and a reall member of his body, this Man, and this Man onely, ſeeks himſelfe. He that ſeeks the *good* of his body, to the *hurt* of his Soule, doth not *ſeeke* himſelf, but the *deſtruction* both of Body and Soule. That Man that makes ſuch a fire, as to burne himſelf and his houſe, doth not ſeek the good of himſelfe nor his houſe. That Merchant that ſo over-loads his Ship, as to drowne it, and himſelfe, doth not ſeek his owne good. Even ſo that Man that over-pampers his Body, that laboureth *curare cutem, magis quam animam*, to ſtuffe his body with dainty food, to cloath his body with fine apparell, and in the mean time to neglect his moſt pretious Soule, this Man doth not ſeek himſelfe, but ruine himſelfe. For the happineſſe of the Body, depends upon the happineſſe of the Soule. If the Soul goe to Hell at death, the Body at the great reſurrection will goe thither alſo: And therefore he that beates downe his Body

body, and brings it into subjection, and labours to make it a fit servant to his soule, that endures hardship with his body, as *a good Souldier of Jesus Christ*, that weares and tires out his body in the service of God; that works with his body for the good of his soule; this is the true, heavenly, and blessed Selfe-seeker.

*That man who seeks his eternall good more than his temporall, who seeks not onely to make himself e happy for forty or fifty years, but for ever and ever; This man seeks himselfe after a divine manner.* For what will it profit a man to be happy for a few years in this life, and to be miserable for ever in hell hereafter? How quickly will a man in hell forget the happinesse he had here? He that makes provision to live pleasurably and comfortably while he lives, but makes no provision to live happily when he dyes, this man may seeme to *love himselfe* for a *minute*, but sure I am he *hates himselfe to all eternity*. He that layeth up treasure for himselfe upon earth, but none in heaven, may be accounted rich in this world, which will quickly end, but he will be poore world without end. Such a selfe-hater was *Dives*, *Luc.* 16. and the rich foole, *Luc.* 12. and *such are all they that lay up treasure for themselves, but are not rich towards God*, *Luc.* 12. 21. He is a divine selfe-seeker, who endeavours to live *holily* here, that he may live *happily* hereafter; to live *graciously* here, that he may inherit *eternall glory* hereafter. Prop. 2.

*He that denyeth his sinfull selfe most, seeketh himself e most.* He that hates himselfe as corrupted by *Adams* fall, and seeketh the utter ruine and extirpation of the old *Adam* within him, this man doth truly love himself. This is divine self-seeking, to kill thy sins, that thy sins may not kill thy soule. As *Zipporah* by *circumcising* her child, saved the life of her *husband*: So the way to save thy soule, is to *circumcise* and pare off περιτομην καρδιων, *all superfluity of naughtinesse*, *James* 1. 21. This is the meaning of that which Christ saith, *Mat.* 5. 29, 30. *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee, for it is* pro- Prop. 3.

*profitable*, &c. The more thou hateſt thy gainful and pleaſurable ſins, the more thou loveſt thy ſelf. As a man in a *Dropſie*, the more he denieth himſelf *drink* the more he *ſeekes himſelf*; becauſe the leſſe he *drinketh* the more he *deſtroyeth* his *diſeaſe*. Even ſo the more thou *denieſt* thy corrupt ſelf, the more thou *ſeekeſt* thy ſelf, becauſe the more thou *denieſt thy corrupt ſelf*, the more thou *deſtroyeſt* thy *ſpirituall diſeaſes*; the more thou ruinateſt the *Devils faction* within thee, & weakenſt the oppoſition of the Fleſh againſt the Spirit. He that loves his ſins, hates his own ſoul, *Pro.* 8. 36. *Gal.* 6. 8. he that *ſoweth ſin*, ſhall *reap hell*, he that makes *proviſion for the fleſh*, *provides fuel for hel fire*. He that nouriſheth the old *Adam* within him, cheriſheth that which taints and polluteth all his holy duties, which indiſpoſeth him to all good, and diſpoſeth him to all evill, he cheriſheth his Souls greateſt enemy, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. he delights in that, which was *Pauls* greateſt miſery, and which made him cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death*, Rom. 7. 24. therefore I may truly ſay, he that is the greateſt *ſelfe-denier*, is the greateſt *ſelfe-ſeeker*.

Prop. 4. *He that ſeeks to doe moſt ſervice to God in his generation, that ſeeks his own glory, by ſeeking Gods glory, is a Divine ſelf-ſeeker.* The reaſon is, becauſe the *perfection of every thing conſiſteth, in attaining the end for which it was made.* As the perfection of meat is to be eaten, he that hoards it up and will not eate it, deſtroyes it. The end for which God made Man is to ſerve him, to glorifie him here, and enjoy him hereafter. Therefore the more ſervice we doe to God, the more we ſeek his glory; the more we attaine the end of our creation, and therein we are the more happy. *He that loves himſelfe for himſelfe, and for his owne ends, deſtroyes himſelfe*, becauſe the end for which God made us, is to ſerve him, and not our ſelves. When all the ſtreames of ſelfe-love flow into the great Ocean of the love of God, this is Divine ſelfe-love. Oh that men would thus labour to love themſelves, and ſeek themſelves, to look upon themſelves as ſervants and inſtruments unto God and his glory; to ſay, *Lord, how may I advance my ſelfe, by advancing thy name! how may I glorifie my ſelfe, by glorifying of thee? How may I ſeeke my ſelfe, by ſeeking thy praiſe, and*

per-

perfect my selfe, by disposing of my selfe of my understanding, memory, will, heart, affections and actions, in order to thee and thy glory.

*The more a man serves God out of pure love, without reflection to selfe, the more he seeks himselfe*; for this is a certaine truth, *The lesse we seek our selves and our owne ends in any holy duty, the more we seek our selves*, because the lesse we seek our selves, the more we seek God and his glory, and the more we seek God & his glory, the more reward we shall have. *The lesse we look after reward for that we doe, the more reward we shall have*; and therefore the Papists who teach men to doe good works that thereby they might merit heaven, (supposing their Doctrine to be true) lose all the reward of their good worke. *He that serves God to merit by his service, cannot merit by his service; the more he eyes merit, the lesse he merits*. He that serves God for his owne ends, doth not serve God but himselfe; but he that serves God for Gods sake, shall be rewarded by God. The lesse we eye our selves in any duty, the more reward we shall have, and therefore the more we seek our selves. Prop. 5.

*That man who seeks the glory and honour of God, above his owne glory and honour, is a Divine selfe-seeker.* The reason is, because the *happinesse of Man is more in God than in himselfe*. As the happinesse of a *member* of the body is in *conjunction* with the body, (take it from the body it dieth.) So the *happinesse* of Man is in *conjunction with God*, who is our *chiefest good*, who is an *universall good*, therefore he that seeks union with God most, seeks himselfe most. As the safety of the *beame* is more in the *Sun* then in it *selfe*, and of the streame in the Fountaine, then in it selfe. So the safety, comfort and happinesse of every Christian, is more in *God* then in himself, therefore he that seeks the glory and honour of God, more than his owne glory and honour, is a heavenly and blessed selfe-seeker. Prop. 6.

*He that loves the publique good more than his owne private good, that seeks the prosperity of Sion and Jerusalem, of Church and State more than his owne, is a Divine selfe-seeker.* Oh that this word were mingled with Faith! A man that is in dan- Prop. 7.

ger to have his head cut off, will willingly (even out of selfe-love) lift up his arme and suffer it to be cut off to save his head, because his life is more in his head than in his arme: Our safety is more wrapt up in the *publique welfare*, than in our *private*, and therefore they who prefetre the *publique*, before the *private*, are the *truest selfe-seekers*. Thus did *Old Ely*, he mourned more for the losse of the Arke, than of his two Sons. Thus also did *David*, *Psa* 137.6. *He preferred Jerusalem above his chiefe joy*, In a storme at Sea, he that seeks the preservation of the Ship, seeks most the preservation of his own Trunk, for if the Ship be drowned, his Trunk cannot be saved. The truth is, if the Church and the true Religion be destroyed, to what purpose is it for a godly man to live? I read of *Titus Vespasian*, that when the Souldiers had destroyed the Temple of *Jerusalem*, they came to him and asked him, what they should doe with the Priests that did supervive? *Kill them* (said he) *for now their worke is at an end.* When Religion is destroyed, what will it advantage a godly man to live? therefore they that seek the good of the Church, more than their owne, are blessed selfe-seekers.

Prop. 8. *That man who had rather lose wife, children, estate and life it selfe, than sinne against God, is a Divine selfe-seeker:* The reason is, because his *happinesse is more in keeping a good Conscience, than in keeping his Estate or saving his Life.* The holy Martyrs *who loved not their lives unto the death*, were the *greatest selfe-seekers*. It is a most blessed selfe-seeking, to suffer the *fire of Martyrdome*, to avoid the *fire of Hell*, to lose *earthly promotions*, to attain *everlasting honours:* And therefore Christ argueth from selfe-love, Mat. 16.25. *Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall finde it*; so also *Mark.* 10.29,30. the antient Martyrs did the like, *Heb.* 10.34, *Hab* 11.35. *He that loseth all for Christ, shall finde more than he hath lost in Christ.*

From all that I have said concerning this blessed selfe-seeking, I gather these three conclusions:

1. That no Man is a true *selfe-seeker*, who is not a true *Christ-seeker*.

2. That *true Religion*, and a *conscioncious* walking according

to

to the rules of it is founded upon *Right reaſon*, and that no man can be truely ſaid to be a *rationall man*, who is not a *Religious man*; for the more *Religious* any man is, the more he ſeeks himſelfe and his owne happineſſe; the more *irreligious* he is, the more he *ruinateth and deſtroyeth himſelfe*.

3. That whoſoever would love himſelfe, and ſeek himſelfe aright, muſt labour to ſeek the things of Jeſus Chriſt. Oh that I could perſwade you to this bleſſed Selfe-ſeeking, to ſeek your owne gaine and honour, in ſeeking the honour of God, and good of Church and State.

But now in the third place, beſides this lawfull, and this heavenly, and bleſſed ſelfe-ſeeking, there is a *ſinfull, curſed, and deviliſh ſelfe-ſeeking*, a ſelfe-ſeeking which is complained on in the Text, *inconſiſtent and incompoſſible*, with a true Chriſt-ſeeking, which is the root of all the miſeries that have hapned to this Nation. The great Church and State, and Soul-deſtroyer. This leads me to the ſecond queſtion.

Queſt. 2. *What is that ſelfe-ſeeking, which is inconſiſtent with Chriſt ſeeking?*

*Anſw.* It is a *ſpirituall Monſter* with ſix heads.

1. When a Chriſtian ſeeks his owne things *dividedly* from the things of Chriſt, when he ſeeks his owne eaſe, ſafety and intereſt, and cares not at all what becomes of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and his cauſe, when he ſets up himſelfe, and makes himſelfe the *principle, rule*, and *end* of all his undertakings, acting from *ſelf* as a principle, by *ſelfe* as a rule, for *ſelf* as an end. When a Man makes *himſelfe his God*, worſhipeth himſelfe, and doth whatſoever he doth for his carnall ſelfe, ſerves himſelfe in Committees, Army, Parliament, Miniſtry, and cares not what becomes of Religion and Reformation. This is the firſt head of this Monſter; ſuch a *ſelfe-ſeeker* was *Gallio* the Deputy, *Act.* 18. 17. who cared not what became of Religion. *If it had been a matter of wrong, he would have heard it*, but becauſe it was a matter of Religion, he cared for none of thoſe things. Such *ſelfe-ſeekers*, were the people of *Meroz*, and therefore the Iſraelites were commanded to curſe them, *Judges* 5. 23.

2. When a Chriſtian ſeeks his *owne things*, and the *things of Chriſt* alſo, but ſeeks his owne things *antecedently* to the

*things of Christ*. When he first seeks his owne things, and afterwards the things of Christ; of this the Prophet *Haggai* complanes, *Hag*.1.2,3,4,5,9,10,11. The people said, *It was not time to build Gods house, but it was time to build their owne houses*. Therefore the *Heavens* over them were as *brasse*, and the *Earth* withheld her *fruit*.

3. When a man seeks his owne things, and the things of Christ also, but seeks his own things, *chiefly and principally*, not onely before, but more then the things of Christ, and that both in his value and esteem, and in his love and affection. When a man *prizeth* his owne profit and preferment, and *loveth* his owne praise and glory more than the profit, praise and honour of Christ and his Gospel. Such were the *Gaderens*, who preferred their Hogges before Christ. Such were the *Merchants and Farmers*, *Mat*. 21. 3. who made light of the call of Christ, and preferred their Farmes and Merchandizing before Christ and his Gospel. Such was *Demas*, who forsook *Paul* and embraced the present world, and such were the *Pharisees*, John 12.43. *Who loved the praise of Men, more than the praise of God*.

4. When a Christian seeks his *owne things* in seeking the *things of Christ*, when he *pretends* to seek the things of Christ, and yet intends no such thing, but seeks *himselfe* even under *colour* of seeking the things of Christ. Such a one was *Jehu*, who pretended a great deale of zeale for the Lord of Hosts. *Come* (said he to *Jonadab*) *and behold my zeale*, &c. but he did but pretend a zeale for God, his zeal was to purchase the Kingdome to himselfe. Such a one was *Balaam*, who pretended that if he had a house full of Gold and Silver offered him, he would not goe beyond the Commandement of God, and yet notwithstanding he did but counterfeit, for he loved the wages of iniquity, and was mad after the preferments that *Balac* proffered him. Such another was *Demetrius* the Silver-Smith, who pretended a zeal to the great *Goddesse Diana*, and therefore caused an uproare against *Paul* to defend the Goddesse, but it was the gaine he got by making Shrines for *Diana*, that was the principle that set him on worke, he pretended *Diana*, but intended himselfe, he had *dolum in fabulâ*, as one saith.

5. When

5. When a man ſeeks his owne things, when they ſtand in *competition with*, and in *oppoſition to* the things of Chriſt, when things come to ſo narrow a bridge, that either he muſt part with Eſtate, Liberty, and Life, or with Chriſt and a good Conſcience: If he chooſeth to part with Chriſt and a good Conſcience, rather than with his Liberty, Eſtate or Life, this is a wicked ſelf-ſeeker. Such a one was the *young man* in the Goſpel, who *forſook Chriſt*, rather than he would part with his *great poſſeſſions*. Such was *Spyra*, who himſelf tels the ſtory; that he *placed Wife, Children, Liberty, Eſtate and Life, in one part of the ballance*; And *God, Chriſt, the Goſpel, and a good Conſcience in the other, and forſook the laſt to preſerve the firſt.*

6. The laſt head of this Monſter is, when a Chriſtian ſeeks the good of his *Body*, to the prejudice of his *Soule*, when he beſtoweth all his time, all his ſtrength, and all his cares and indeavours, in providing for his periſhing carcaſſe, and neglects to provide for his eternall *Soule*, when he layeth up all his treaſure upon earth, but hath no treaſure layed up in Heaven, when he is *anxiouſly ſolicitous* for his comfortable living in this world, but ſtrangely *neglectfull*, to take care for his happy living in the other world, this is a ſinfull, curſed, and deviliſh ſelf-ſeeking. So much in anſwer to the ſecond queſtion.

The third queſtion is, *How is it poſſible that there ſhould be ſo many men who profeſſe themſelves to be Chriſtians and (in words at leaſt) profeſs love to Chriſt and his intereſt, and yet notwithſtanding ſhould ſeek their owne intereſt before, and more than the intereſt of Chriſt?*

*Anſw.* This *Soule-deſtroying* and *Church-deſtroying* ſelfe-ſeeking proceedeth from *ſix ſinfull and curſed roots.*

1. From want of *true and unfeigned love to Jeſus Chriſt, and his intereſt.* Love is a moſt powerfull affection, the Maſter-wheel that carrieth the whole Soul after it. *Amor meus pondus meũ*, ſaith *Aug. eo feror quocunq; feror.* As the *primũ mobile* in the heavens carrieth all the other Spheres about with it, ſo Love carrieth the whole man with it. *Love is as ſtrong as death, many waters cannot quench love, neither can the flood drown it. If a man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for love, it would be con-*

*temned,*

*temned*, Cant. 8. 6, 7. If we did love the Lord Jeſus and his Goſpel, in good earneſt, we would rather part with Liberty, Eſtate, Life, and all our own things, than loſe the things of Chriſt as the bleſſed Martyrs did. But becauſe there are few men that love Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity, hence it is that moſt men ſeek their owne things, and not the things of Chriſt.

2 This proceedeth from that *curſed ſelfe-love*, which is in all men by nature. Of this you ſhall read, 2 *Tim* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5. where *ſelfe-love* is placed in the *fore-front* as the cauſe and root of all the other ſins there named. *Selfe-love* is like a *great tree*, and eighteen ſins as eighteen branches ſprouting out from this root, becauſe men are *lovers of themſelves*, therefore they are *covetous*, *proud*, *unthankfull*, *unholy*, *lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God*, &c. From this ſinfull ſelf-love proceeds this ſinfull ſelf-ſeeking. As the love of Chriſt is the *root* of Chriſt-ſeeking, ſo the love of our ſelves is the *root* of ſinfull ſelf ſeeking.

3. From that *immoderate* and *inordinate worldly love* which is in all men by Nature: for (as a Martyr well ſaid at the ſtake) if we ſhould unrip and anatomize a wicked man, we ſhould finde nothing in him but [illegible] *love*, and *worldly love*: by Nature we love the *Creature* more than the *Creator*, pleaſures more than God, and the *praiſe of Men*, more than the *praiſe of God*. By nature we love our own gain, and our own ſafety, and eaſe, more than the things of Chriſt; and therefore it is that we ſeek our own things, and not the things of Chriſt.

4. From that *hypocriſie*, *inſincerity*, *and rottenneſſe of heart* which is in all men by nature, hence it is that men pretend Jeſus Chriſt, but intend their own private intereſt, becauſe of the hypocriſie and falſeneſſe of their hearts. Thus the Phariſees, who were Hypocrites, under *pretence made long prayers that they might devour widdows houſes*, Mat. 23. 14. Thus *Herod* pretends to worſhip Chriſt, when his intendment was to *worry* him, Mat. 2. 8. Thus *Jeſebel* proclaimeth a Faſt, and pretends Religion, but intends onely to put *Naboth* to death, and to get his Vineyard. Thus *Abſolom* covers over his Rebellion with the faire cloak of Religion, 2 *Sam.* 15. 7. There are two things that are in all men by nature:

1. To make a *ſhew of Religion*. 2. To

2. To cover over all manner of wickedneſs under the ſhew of Religion; Ungodlineſſe is ſo odious, that if it ſhould appeare in its own colours, all men would abhorre it; and therefore as the Devill never ſheweth himſelf but under ſome handſome form, ſometimes under *Samuels* mantle, ſometimes transformed into an Angel of light; ſo doth ſin and iniquity alwaies appeare under the form of godlineſſe. The Apoſtle tells 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. that in the laſt times there ſhould be men, who *ſhould be lovers of themſelves, treacherous, heady, high-minded, without naturall affection*, &c. having a *form of godlineſſe*; which laſt words are to be underſtood κατὰ κοινὸν as relating to all the former ſins. They ſhould be *Covenant-breakers*, having a *form of godlineſſe*, covetous, falſe accuſers, blaſphemous ſelf-lovers, *having a form of godlineſſe*. They ſhould (through the Hypociſie that is in them) cover all their ſins under the *vizard* of a form of godlineſſe.

5. This ſinfull ſelf-ſeeking ariſeth from that *ſpirituall ignorance and blindneſſe* which is in all men by nature. There is no wicked man rightly underſtands what it is to ſeek himſelf: for he thinks, that if he ſeeks to ſatisfie his corrupt ſelf, he ſeeks himſelf; if he ſeeks the good of his body with the neglect of his ſoule, he ſeeks himſelf. He thinks that if he ſeeks his own eaſe, gain, ſafety, and preferment, without looking after the things of Chriſt, that he ſeeks himſelf. Thus did the rich Fool, *Luke* 12. who built his barnes bigger, and ſaid, *ſoule take thy eaſe*, &c. he ſuppoſed that he ſought his own happineſſe in ſo doing: and ſo did the *rich Glutton, when he cloathed himſelfe in purple, and fared deliciouſly ever day*, &c. But now did a wicked man convincingly underſtand, that this *ſelf-ſeeking* is *ſelf-hating*, and *ſelf-deſtroying*: That the rich Glutton by *pampering* his body, *damned* his ſoule: that the rich Fool, by laying up goods for a *few yeares*, loſt his ſoule to all *eternity*: That he that *denieth himſelf moſt, ſeeks himſelf moſt*: He that *ſerves God beſt, ſeeks himſelf moſt*: He that ſeeks the *glory of God* before his *owne glory*, and the *good of Church and State* more than his *own good*, ſeeks himſelf moſt: that he that loſeth his life for Chriſt, ſhall finde a better life in Chriſt: Did he (I ſay) convincingly believe this, he would not ſinfully ſeek himſelf.

Therefore this ſinfull ſelf-ſeeking proceedeth from that ſpirituall ignorance and blindneſſe that is in all by Nature.

6. Laſtly, it ſprings from that *Spirituall ſelf-deceit* and *ſonl-deluſion* that is in all men by nature: Every man by nature, is (*Narciſſus* like) in love with himſelf, blinde in his own cauſe, and apt to think that he ſeeks the things of Chriſt, when he doth not, and that he doth not ſeek his own things in *oppoſition* to, *competition* with, or compariſon of the things of Chriſt, even as the Philoſopher, who could not be perſwaded, but that ſnow was black, or the mad Athenian, that all the ſhips that came to *Athens* were his. So there are multitudes of Chriſtians, who fancy to themſelves, that they do ſeek the things of Chriſt, when it is apparent to others that they doe not: and by this ſelf-deceit couzen themſelves into Hell. Thus you ſee the curſed roots from whence this ſinfull ſelf-ſeeking proceeds.

Qu. 4. The fourth and laſt queſtion is, wherein the *grievouſneſſe* and *miſchievouſneſſe* of this ſinfull ſelfe-ſeeking conſiſteth?

*Anſw.* It is a *ſin* of the *firſt magnitude*. Though it be an inward inviſible ſin, and therefore not ſo infamous and ſcandalous to the eyes of men, as ſome other ſinnes are, yet it is very odious and abominable in the ſight of God. Though it be *minoris infamiæ*, yet it is *majoris culpæ*. For,

1. It is a ſin againſt the expreſſe words of the Scripture. The Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Corin.* 10. 24. *Let no man ſeek his owne, but every man anothers wealth.* The *ſinfull ſelfe-ſeeker* lives *Antipodes* to this Text, he ſeeks his own, and not anothers wealth.

2. It is a ſin *againſt the light of nature*. Nature it ſelf teacheth us, that no man is born for himſelf, but for the good of the Common-wealth, in which he lives. The very *Heathens* abominate a ſelf-ſeeker.

3. It is a ſin againſt the *pattern* that *Chriſt* hath left us: For he came into the world, not *to do his own will, but the will of him that ſent him*; he *pleaſed not himſelf*, Rom. 15. 2. he *made him-*

*himself of no reputation, he humbled himself, and became obedient, even to the death of the Crosse:* He denied himself so far, as to be *made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousnesse of God in him.* Now it is a certain Maxime, *That he who doth not follow the example of Christs life, shall never have any benefit by the merit of his death:* Christ is *meritum* only to those to whom he is *exemplum.*

4. It is a sin against *the royall law of Charity.* Charity is a most noble grace, the very queen of all graces; it is as *necessary* as it is *excellent.* For *though we bestow all we have to feed the poore, though we give our bodies to be burnt, yet if we have not Charity, it profiteth us nothing.* But now a self-seeker is made up all of uncharitablenesse.

1. He hath no love unto *Jesus Christ* & his interest, and there is a double curse pronounced against those that love not the Lord Jesus, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22.

2. He hath no love *to his Neighbour*, but for his owne ends; it is *amor concupiscentiæ vel amicitiæ*, it is not love, but merchandize.

3 He hath no love to *Church nor State*: All his love centers in himself: He is wholly compounded of *self love*, and *creature love*, which is a *composition God* hates.

5. It is a Sin that makes all our *holy duties abominable in the sight of God.* Though the actions we doe be never so holy, yet if we do them upon politique designes, if we aim at our selves in what we do, the Lord abhorres us and all we do, as we see in the Pharisees, who in their Almes, Prayers, and Fastings, did all to be seen of men, and therefore God abhorred all they did. *Self-aimes pollute and putrifie all holy actions.*

6. It is a sin of horrible Hypocrisie: for it is making use of Religion as a *ladder* to clime up to preferment, and then casting the *ladder away*; it is setting up *God* as a *Pander* to our ambitious and covetous interest, which is Hypocrisie, to be abhorred. This is *uti Deo ut fruamur nobismetipsis*, which is no little transgression.

7. It is *Idolatry in the highest degree*; it is *deifying* or worshipping of self; it is making ourselves and our own interest, the root, rule, and scope of all our undertakings, which is to

make an Idoll of our selves, and to usurp the throne of God. It is Idolatry against the first Commandement, which is greater than Idolatry against the second, by how much the heart is better than the knee.

3. It is a sin that is the fruit of six cursed roots (as you have already heard) and the root of many cursed fruits: It is *Metropolis omnium vitiorum*, a sin, and the cause of all sin, the *Plague-sore of Church and State*, the *great Church-devouring, and State destroying sin*. To give some few instances.

What is the reason that the *Government* of the *Church*, so happily *begun*, is now *obstructed*, and almost quite broken in pieces? Is it not because all men seek their owne, and no men the things of Christ?

What is the reason that the *house of God* lieth waste, and every man labours to build his own house?

Why is it that men complain of taxes and want of trading, but no man complaines that the House of God is neglected, the pure Ordinances despised, and the godly Ministry undervalued? Is it not because all men seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ?

What is the reason that the *truths of Christ* are trampled under feet, and men are suffered to deny the Divinity of Christ and of the Scriptures, and no man saith, why do you so? But let a man but speak a word against the lawes of men, he shall be severely punished: Is not this, because all men seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ?

What is the reason that so *few Gentlemen*, *Citizens*, and *Ministers*, appeare for the things of Christ? that so many silence themselves, and suffer Religion to be almost lost, and yet dare not appeare for it? Why is it that our Lectures are so little frequented in most places? that many think nothing too much to give to their Physitian, but any thing too much for their Minister? that a Master will be very exact to see his servant do his business upon the week daies, but indulge him to do what he will upon the Lords day? Is it not because all men seek their own and not the things of Jesus Christ?

What is the reason that the things of the Church drive on so slowly, like the *Egyptian Chariots*, when the wheels

were

were taken off? what is the reaſon that there is ſo much oppreſſion and injuſtice in places of judicature? So much couſenage and falſe dealing in our commerce one with another, in a word, what is the cauſe of all our miſeries both in Church and State? Is it not becauſe all men ſeek their own, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt? thus you have the greatneſſe and the miſchievouſneſſe of this ſinfull ſelfe-ſeeking. So much for the Explication of the Doctrine, I come now to the Application.

If this be ſo, that amongſt the multitude of Chriſtians that profeſſe love to Chriſt and his cauſe, there are many, yea very many, that ſeek their owne, and not the things of Chriſt. Let us then (I beſeech you) behold as in a *glaſſe*, the *ſinfulneſſe* and *miſerableneſſe* of the times wherein we live, for if the Apoſtle complaines of his times, which were the firſt and the beſt times, the golden Age, the Primitive, Apoſtolical, Virgin-Church, when the Saints of God *met together in one place, with one accord*, much more may we of our times, which are the *laſt* and *worſt*, the iron age, wherein the Church of Chriſt is wofully divided, and wonderfully Apoſtatized: How juſtly (I ſay) may we take up this ſad complaint againſt our times: *All men ſeek their owne, not the things of Jeſus Chriſt?* *Applicat.*

And yet I dare not ſay, all men *collectively*, I believe there are a *few names* even in *England*, *which have not defiled their garments*, and have not bowed their knees to *Baal*, ſome *Magiſtrates*, ſome *Gentlemen*, ſome *Miniſters* and *Citizens* yet remaining, who ſeek the things of *Jeſus Chriſt* more than their owne, yea, with the neglect and loſſe of their owne, who ſeek the proſperity and welfare of *Sion*, more than their own. Some *Ezra's*, *Nehemiah's*, and *Daniel's*, that lay to heart the deſolations of the Church, and with Old *Ely* are more troubled about the *Arke of God*, than their owne *private relations*: But theſe are a very few in compariſon. It is certaine, that moſt of all ſorts are guilty of this ſinfull ſelfe-ſeeking, moſt *Magiſtrates*, moſt *Gentlemen*, *Miniſters* and *Citizens*. Now therefore let us examine our ſelves, whether we be not amongſt the number of this multitude. To quicken you to this conſider,

1. That this ſinne is both a New and an Old Teſtament ſinne. It reigned not onely in *Pauls* time, but in *Debora's*, and *Baraks*, who tell us that *for the diviſions of* Reuben, *there were great ſearchings of heart*, becauſe *he abode among the Sheep-folds, and cared not what became of the Church of God*, Judges 5. 15, 16.

2. It is a *common* and *ordinary* ſinne, few are free from it.

3. It is a *great* and *crying abomination*, as you have heard.

4. It is a *great and hidden iniquity*, an *inward, inviſible*, and *ſpirituall* ſinne, that conſumes *England* as a *moth*, not as a *Lion*: It is threatned, *Hoſ.* 5. 12. 14. That *God would be to* Ephraim *as a Moth*, and as a *Lion*, Murder, Adultery, *Sodomy*, injuſtice, &c. devoures *England* as a *Lion*, but ſelfe-love and ſelfe-ſeeking deſtroies it as a *Moth* ſecretly, and yet certainly: Let us therefore be very ſerious in the worke of ſelfe-trying.

There are three ſorts of men whom I indict as guilty of this ſinfull and curſed ſelfe-ſeeking.

1. Such as *ſeek their owne things, and not at all the things of Chriſt.*
2. Such as *ſeek their own things before, and more than the things of Chriſt.*
3. Such as *pretend to ſeek the things of Chriſt, but ſeek their owne things, under the colour of ſeeking the things of Chriſt.*

1. Such as *ſeek their owne credit, profit, preferment, eaſe and ſafety, and not at all the things of Chriſt*: It is reported of *Agrippina*, the Mother of *Nero*, who being told, that if ever her Son came to be Emperor, he would put her to death; ſhe anſwered, *Peream ego modo ille imperet. Let me periſh ſo he may be Emperour.* There are many ſuch, who ſay in their hearts, *Perat religio modo ego imperem*; So I may get an eſtate, and grow great in the world, no matter what becomes of Religion and Reformation.

Queſt. *Are there any Chriſtians of this minde?*

*Anſw.* There are many who are *called* Chriſtians at large of

of this *minde*, who have the *name* and *but* the name of Christians, and carry this name as *Uriah* did his Letters to *Joab*, *Non ad salutem, sed ad ruinam*, not for *Salvation*, but *Damnation*, you shall know them by this Character.

Let such men as these have their trading as formerly, enjoy outward prosperity, and be freed from taxes, they will thinke themselves sufficiently happy. It is all one to them whether all Religions be tolerated, or none at all. These men say with *Tiberius* the Emperour, *Dii Deorum cura sunto.* Let *God take care of Religion, all our care is for our outward estate*; these are they that make their *Money* their *God*, who *minde earthly things, whose end is damnation*, of whom I may say as Christ of *Iudas*, *better they had never been borne.*

2. Such as *seek their own things before, and more than the things of Christ*, who seek their own intereſt, more cordially, more industriously, and more vigorously, than the intereſt of Religion. Thus did the *Gaderens* (as you have heard) thus doe most Christians.

Queſt. *How shall I know whether I preferre in my judgement, affections, or converſation, my owne outward intereſt, before the intereſt of Christ and the Goſpel?*

*Anſw.* 1. If the seeking of thine own things take up the first, beſt, and most of thy time. If thy marrow and strength of thy Soule, goe out after them, if thou makeſt them thy πρῶτον, thy *Primum quarite*, and *unum neceſſarium*, and the things of Christ, thy πάρεργον, and idle houre. If the seeking of thine own, make thee neglect the things of Christ, or seek after them negligently, this a signe that thou doſt over-value and over-affect thine owne things, and undervalue, and diſ-affect the things of Christ.

2. If thou mourneſt more for *perſonall miſeries*, than for the *deſolations of Sion*, it is a signe thou mindeſt thine owne things more than the things of Christ, this is a frame of spirit, quite oppoſite to true Saintship. *Ezra, Nehemiah, David, Daniel* and *Ieremiah*, were more afflicted with the miſeries of the Church then their owne.

3. If the seeking of thine own things take away thy *courage* for *Christ* and his *cauſe*, and make thee come to Christ by night,

night, as *Nichodemus* did, and the more thou haſt of the world, the leſſe thou appeareſt for Chriſt and his Goſpel; the more honours, the more fearfull: If the *preſerving* of thine owne things make thee *betray* the things of Chriſt by *ſinfull ſilence*, or *baſe cowardiſe*, this is a ſign thou preferreſt thine own intereſt before the intereſt of Chriſt.

4. If the ſeeking of thine own things make thee ſeek to find out *excuſes*, and *vaine pretences*, to hinder thee from appearing for Chriſt, this is a ſign, &c, I read *Luke* 14 18. when the Servant was ſent to fetch the Gueſts to the great Supper of the Goſpel, they *all with one conſent, began to make excuſe*, &c. The times wherein we live, are very ſinfull and perillous: the *Truths and Miniſtry of Chriſt* are trampled under feet, *Religion* and *Reformation* neglected. Now God by us his Ambaſſadors, calls upon you to appear for his Truths, and for his Goſpel-miniſtrie, and Goſpel-ordinances. Meth nks I hear the Nobleman ſay, *I have a great eſtate to loſe, pray have me excuſed*: I heare the rich Citizen ſay, *I ſhall be utterly undone in my trading, pray have me excuſed*: I heare the voluptuous Epicure ſay, *I have married a wife, pray have me excuſed.* Take it for a certain rule, *If the ſeeking of theſe outward things puts thee upon excuſes, thou ſeekeſt them ſinfully*: For if you look into the text forementioned, you will finde that the excuſes there made were

1. *Lying and falſe*, they ſay *they cannot come*, whereas the truth was, *they would not come, non poſſe pretenditur, nolle in cauſâ eſt.*
2. *Poore and frivolous*; What is a Farm in compariſon of Heaven? marrying a Wife in compariſon of being married to Jeſus Chriſt?
3. *Vain and unprofitable*: For notwithſtanding the excuſes they made, it is ſaid, verſe 24. *That none of theſe men which were bidden ſhall taſt of my ſupper.*
4. *Unreaſonable and unconſcionable.* For they made thoſe things *laqueos Diabolı*, ſnares and impediments to hinder them from Chriſt, which would have been *vincula obedientiæ*, motives and incouragements to bring them to Chriſt.

5. Laſtly,

5. Lastly, If when thine owne things and the things of Christ come in *competition*, and thou must either part with the one or the other, if thou chooseſt as *Spyra* did, and as the young man in the Gospel did, rather to part with Christ and his Gospel, than with thy profit and preferment, this is a sure note that thou seekeſt thine own things, before and more than the things of Christ. I read of *Tiberius* Emperour of *Rome*, that he sent to the Senate to receive Christ into the number of their Gods, but they refuſed to doe it upon this account, becauſe if they received him, they must reject all their other Gods, and therefore choſe rather to renounce Jesus Christ, than to receive him, and part with the reſt of their feigned Deities. If thou renounceſt and rejecteſt the Lord Christ and his Truths, rather than thou wilt loſe thy creature-enjoyments, thou art a sinful self-seeker of the higheſt forme.

But now on the contrary, If thou purſueſt after the things of Christ in the *firſt* and *chiefe place*; If thou *mourneſt* more for *Church deſolations* than *perſonall miſeries*; If the more *wealth* thou haſt, the more *couragious* thou art for God, and art glad, that thou haſt an Eſtate to loſe for Christs cauſe; If the seeking of thine owne things doe not put thee upon lying, vaine, frivolous, and unconſcionable excuſes; If thou art like unto *Hermiſdas*, a Nobleman of *Perſia*, who was depoſed from all his Honours becauſe he would not deny his Religion, and afterwards reſtored again, and a little after ſolicited again to deny Christ and his truths, but he rent his purple robe, and laid all his honours at the foot of the Emperour, and ſaid, *Si propter iſta me denegaturum Chriſtum putas, ea dennò accipe.* If you *thinke* to *gaine* me to deny Christ for the *re-obtaining* of my honours, take them *all back againe:* If this be the frame of thy heart, it is a certaine token that thou prizeſt, loveſt and seekeſt the things of Christ before, and more then thine owne things.

3. The third ſort of thoſe who are guilty of this ſinfull ſelfe-ſeeking are *ſuch who pretend to ſeek the things of Chriſt, but ſeek their owne things; under colour of ſeeking the things of Chriſt*, who hold forth the preſervation and propagation of Religion as a *ſtalking horſe*, to catch men by, as a *blinde* to deceive the

world; but aime at nothing leſſe then Religion, but either with *Demetrius* at their owne gaine, or with *Jehu* at the obtaining of a Kingdome, or with *Balaam* at the wages of iniquity. This ſinne of ſelfe-ſeeking is ſo odious both to God and Man, that it never appeares upon the *ſtage* in its owne likeneſſe, but alwaies covered over with *Samuels mantle*: There is no ſinne hath more περιβόλους and ἀναλύμματα, *Fig-leaves* and *religious cloaks* to cover it, then this ſinne. By this meanes the *Pope* of *Rome* hath purchaſed his *triple Crowne*; It is ſaid *Rev.* 13. 11. that *Antichriſt ſhould have two hornes like a Lambe, but yet act like a Dragon*, ſignifying unto us, that *Antichriſt* ſhould under *colour* of *Religion*, *act* all his *villanies*, and *bloudy Maſſacres*, and by this means deceive all the world. Therefore *Antichriſtianiſme* is called a *Myſterie of iniquity*, that is, iniquity covered over with faire ſhewes and pretences of godlineſſe; What Murders, what Treaſons hath not the Pope committed under the colour of defending the Catholique Religion? under pretence of being *Peters* ſucceſſor, and of having *Peters* keyes, and chaire? Witneſſe the holy league (as it was called) in *France*; witneſſe the Gunpowder treaſon amongſt us, undertaken under ſhew of Religion, for the defence of the Catholique cauſe.

What I affirme of Papiſts and Jeſuites, the like I ſay of all the Errors and Hereſies that have been broached in the Chriſtian world; The Apoſtle tells us, that the firſt Authors of Hereſies and Schiſmes were great ſelfe ſeekers. Men *greedy of filthy lucre*, who *ſerved not the Lord Jeſus, but their owne bellies*, who *made merchandiſe of the Soules of people*, making *gaine their godlineſſe*, not *godlineſſe their gaine*. But though they were ſuch, yet they did not appeare to be ſuch, but ſeemed to be very holy and ſelfe-denying: Therefore Chriſt calls them, *Wolves in ſheeps cloathing*, ravening Wolves *inwardly*, though innocent Sheep outwardly. They honied over the poiſon of their Doctrine, with *good words, and faire ſpeeches*, to deceive the hearts of the ſimple, *Rom.* 16. 18. Such a one was *Pelagius* (one of the greateſt enemies to the Doctrine of Grace that ever the Church had) who made ſuch a ſhew of godlineſſe, that when *Hierome* firſt wrote againſt his Hereſies, he

Titus 1. 11.
Rom. 16. 18.
2 Pet. 2. 2.
1 Tim. 6. 5.
Mat. 7. 15.

he was forced to conceale his name, left by appearing to write on purpoſe againſt him, his book ſhould have been rejected by the people, who did ſo highly magnifie him.

Let me adde, This is a ſinne which not onely *Papiſts* and *Jeſuits*, *Schiſmaticks* and *Heretickes*, but moſt *Chriſtians* in the world are tainted withall. It is a moſt true ſaying, *Pauci amant Ieſum propter Ieſum*, there are *few*, and but *very few*, who *love Chriſt for Chriſts ſake*: Moſt people follow *Chriſt* for the *loaves*, and make *uſe* of *Chriſt* to *ſerve* their own ends and intereſt. Let a Man be to *marry a Wife*, and he will in words pretend, that it is *Religion and Godlineſſe* that he moſt of all deſires; but if you had a window to look into his heart, you will finde that it is *Money* which is his chiefe aime. But amongſt all ſorts of Men, the *great Stateſ-men*, and *deep Polititians* are moſt eminently guilty of this ſin, who uſually bring Religion upon the ſtage meerly to uſher in their *Politick deſignes*. It is a curſed *Maxim* in *Machiavel*, that *Kings and Princes ſhould labour after a ſhew of Religion, but not look much after the ſubſtance*; For the *ſubſtance* would be a burden, but the *ſhew* of it would be very uſefull for the carrying on of their own ends and deſignes. This wicked adviſe and counſell is followed by many Kingdoms & Common-wealths at this day: there was ſcarce ever any *State* or *Church-reformer* who did reforme *Religion* for *Religions ſake*, but for his *owne ends*, either to be revenged of his enemies, or to gaine Church-revenues, or to be a coy-Duck, to draw a party to ſide with him. Let me give in a few Examples;

It pleaſed God ſo to order affaires, in *Henry* the Eights time, that the *Popes ſupremacy* was aboliſhed in *England*: But what was the principle that moved the King to doe this? was it out of love to the true Religion? or was it not rather that thereby he might be revenged of the Pope, who would not allow of his Divorce from his firſt Wife?

I have read of *Maximilian* Emperour of *Germany*, who living in *Luthers* time, profeſſed a great deale of zeale after Reformation; and eſpecially, in plucking down golden Images. But the ſtory ſaith, that it was not ſo much out of

*hatred* to the Images, as out of love to the *gold*, which made him undertake it.

In the Hiſtory of the Civill Warres in *France*, I read that when the Princes of the blood fell out one with another, one party called in the *Proteſtants* to their aſſiſtance, not out of love to *Religion*, but that thereby they might gaine a party.

That which I ſay of Kingdomes and Common-wealths, the like I ſay of Armies; I read of *Goliahs ſword hid in a cloth behind the Ephod*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 9. The *ſword* never appeares to the world under *bloudy colours*, but alwayes *cloathed* with a *linnen Ephod*, pretending Reformation of abuſes in Church and State. But it is worth remembring, that this ſword was the *ſword of Goliah*, who was a *defier* of the *Iſrael of God*, and a great *enemy to Religion*. The ſumme of all amounts to this, that in all ages of the Church, eſpecially in times of *Civil Warre*, and in times of *Reformation*, there are thouſands that hold forth to the world, in their words and Declarations, a ſincere deſire to propagate the *Goſpel* and the *Kingdome* of *Chriſt*, and to advance the pure *Ordinances* of *Chriſt*, yet notwithſtanding minde nothing really and inwardly, but their preferment and advancement.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I know whether I am but a pretender to the things of Ieſus Chriſt? whether I am one who makes uſe of Religion to ſerve mine owne intereſt? Whether I am like* Demetrius *the Silver-ſmith, who minded his gaine more then his* Goddeſſe?

*Anſw.* If we would deale faithfully with our owne Soules, we could not but eaſily know this. To help you in it, take theſe rules:

1. If thou art *as zealous* for the advancement of Religion and Reformation, when it doth not concerne thy *intereſt*, as *when it doth*; this is a certaine ſigne thou ſeekeſt the things of Chriſt in ſincerity: Thus it was with *Moſes*, in the *Rebellion of Corah and his company*, there was a *conjunction of intereſts*; the conſpiracy was againſt God and *Moſes*, but the *Idolatry* of the *Golden calfe*, was onely againſt the *intereſt* of *God*, *Moſes* was not prejudiced by it, and yet he was every way as zealous for

for the *glory of God* in the *latter*, as in the *former*. But now on the contrary, if thou driveſt *furiouſly* when any gaine is to be got by a Reformation, but very *heavily* and *ſlowly*, when thy intereſt is not at all concerned, this is a ſigne that thou makeſt *uſe* of *Religion* for thine owne ends. Thus it was with *Iehu*, he had a *double Idolatry* to root out, the *Idolatry* of *Baal*, and of *Ieroboams Calves*; he *deſtroyed* the firſt, but *continued* the ſecond, becauſe it was againſt his intereſt to aboliſh it. Thus it is with many Maſters of Families, if their Servants play the theeves, they will cry out againſt them as diſhonourers of God; but let the ſame Servants prophane the *Sabbath*, or abuſe the *name of God* by *vaine Oaths*, they are not troubled at it, becauſe it is not againſt their private intereſt.

2. A *pretender* to the things of Chriſt, if he undertakes to doe ſervice for *Church or State*, he will doe it by *halves*, ſo far as it makes for his intereſt and no farther. This is the reaſon why the Reformation of Religion in moſt places of the Chriſtian world is but a *patcht Reformation*, and as a *Cake halfe baked*, becauſe that *States and Kingdomes* mould the *Reformation*, not according to the *Word of God*, but according to *State-intereſt*. Thus it was in *Henry* the Eights time, he thruſt out the *Popes Supremacy* becauſe it furthered his deſigne of a ſecond Marriage, but he continued much of the Popiſh Religion, and made *ſix Articles* called *A whip, with ſix ſtrings*, which were the death of many godly men. *Eraſmus* hath a notable ſaying of *Luther*, That he had been a good man, had he not medled too much with the *Monks bellies*, and the *Popes triple Crowne*, the Pope was willing to yield to a Reformation of the Church, ſo far as it might conſiſt with the upholding of his *triple Crowne*, and no further, *&c.*

3. A *pretender* to the things of Chriſt when he hath got what he aimes at, will *leave Chriſt wholly*, and *lay aſide* all his pretences. As the *Angels* who appeared to *Abraham* and *Lot*, and divers others, *aſſumed bodies*, not out of love to the bodies they aſſumed, but onely to *doe their errant*, and when they had done it laied them aſide. So there are many who *aſſume a*

*profession of Religion* for the pursuing of their ambitious designes, which when they have obtained they lay aside, as the *Fisherman did his Net, when he was made Pope*; when he was an *Abbot*, and then a *Bishop*, and then a *Cardinal*, he would have his *Net* spread for a *Table-cloath*, to put him in minde of his meane and poor originall; But when he came to be Pope, he then commanded his *Servants* to lay aside his *Net*, for now he had caught what he had been so long *Fishing* for.

4. He that seeks his owne things, under *pretence* of seeking the things of *Christ*, will *walke contrary* to his *Protestations, Declarations, Vowes* and *Covenants*, even then, when he seems outwardly to be most solemne and serious in making of them. Thus did *Balaam*, he protesteth, that if he had an house full of Gold given him, he could not doe any thing contrary to the will of God, and yet at the same time, he goeth with the Messengers sent by *Balac*. Are there not many amongst us, who when they *Covenanted with hands lifted up to Heaven, to endeavour the extirpation of error and Heresie, and whatsoever was contrary to sound Doctrine, did even at the very same time, secretly foment and countenance the things they Covenanted against?*

5. Lastly, He that *pretends* to the things of Christ, and *intends* his own, *cares* not *by what wayes* and *meanes* he compasseth his ends, nor by what kind of persons; whether the *wayes* be *lawfull* or *unlawfull*, the *persons* good or bad, it is all one to him so he may obtaine his *ambitious intendments*, which is a certaine signe of a notorious hypocrite. For *he that truly and sincerely indeavours to promote the Glory and Honour of Christ, will never goe out of Christs way to obtaine his desires.* For Christ will be more *dishonoured* by his sin, than honoured by his indeavours, though never so laborious and sincere.

Let us I beseech you examine our selves, according to these severall notes and markes, whether we be guilty of this *sinfull cursed and Devilish selfe-seeking*. And know, that if this sinne rule and raigne in us, it makes us accessary to a *fourefould murder*; It makes us *selfe-murderers, Church* and *State-murderers*, and *Christ-murderers*. It brings us under a *double*

*Gospel*

*Gospel curse, for if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be* (saith the Apostle) *Anathema Maranatha.* The Lord give us hearts seriously to weigh these things.

The second Use is, an use of Exhortation, which is two-fold: 2. *Use.*

1. To beseech all here present, whether *Magistrates, Ministers* or *private Citizens*, to take heed of this sinfull selfe-seeking, and sixe headed Monster, of seeking our owne gaine and credit *seperatedly* from the things of Christ, or *before*, or *more* then the things of Christ, of seeking our owne things under *pretence* of seeking the things of Christ, or when they stand in *opposition* to, or *competition* with the things of Christ, of seeking the good of our *vile bodies*, with the neglect of our *pretious and immortall Soules*. As Christ saith of Covetousnesse, so I of this sinne, *Take heed and beware of sinfull selfe-seeking*, consider the *exceeding greatnesse* of this sinne, and the *woefull and mischievous fruits and effects of it*. This is the *plague-sore* of *Church and State*; The great *Caterpillar* that *devours* all the *green things of the land*. This hath destroyed our *Parliaments*, our *Ministery*, our *Gentry*: This is that which *obstructeth* that glorious *reformation* so long *expected* and *desired*, &c. This is not *selfe-seeking* but *selfe-hating* and *selfe-destroying*: he that *seeks* to give *satisfaction* to his *corrupt selfe*, is just like a *Man* who gives *strong wine* to his *friend in a high Feaver*, which is not to *love* him, but to *kill him*. He that seeks to please his *sinfull selfe*, seeks to strengthen his *disease*, to *maintaine* that within him, which *God hateth*, and to *nourish* that which will *destroy* his Soule. He that seeks the *welfare* of his *body*, and neglects the *welfare* of his *soule*, destroyes (as I have said) both *body* and *soul*. This is just as if a *Husbandman* in time of *Harvest* should gather in his *stubble*, & leave his *corne* to be *devoured by hoggs*. Just like a Father who takes care to *feed* & *cloath* his children, but not to instruct and teach them. In a word, he that seeks his owne ease and safety, his owne gaine and credit, his owne pleasure and satisfaction, and neglecteth and slighteth the things of Christ, this Man is the greatest *selfe-hater*, and *selfe-destroyer*; For he *that seeks not the interest of Christ, shall never have any interest in Christ*. *Exhort:* 1.

To

*Exhort. 2.* 2. To beseech you to labour for the divine, heavenly, and blessed self-seeking mentioned in the beginning of the Sermon: Physitians when they see men bleed immoderately at the nose, will let them bloud in another veine, that so they may make a diversion, and thereby stop the bleeding. Oh that God would use me this day, as his instrument, to make a most glorious and most happy diversion, and to turn you all from *self-seekers*, into *Christ-seekers*! Oh that I could prevaile with you, to seek the things of Jesus Christ before, and more then your own things! Oh how happy would *London* be, if it could be said of it; *All thy Magistrates, Ministers, and private people, seek the things of Christ more vigorously and cordially then they doe their own things.*

To move you to this, consider;

1. What these your *own things are* which you so immoderately and inordinately seek after?

1. They are not your *owne* in a proper sence, as you have heard.
2. They are not *worth owning*, they are vain and empty, empty of *reality, and Soul-satisfaction*, they are *vanishing & perishing*, like *houses made of Snow or waxe*, and not only so, but they are also *vexing* and *tormenting*, according to what is said by one that had full and ample experience of them, *Eccles.* 2. 2, 17, 26.

2. Consider the *excellency of the things of Jesus Christ which you so much neglect & undervalue.* The *truths of Christ*, the *Ordinances, Day, Ministry*, and *Government of Christ*, the *Preservation, Propagation, and Reformation of Religion*: These are Glorious and Excellent things in their own Nature, and so far exceeding your *own* things which you so greedily labour after, that they are not worthy to be named that day in which we speak of the *things of Christ*. I want time to set out the transcendent Glory and Excellency of *Gospel concernments*, and the vanity, emptinesse, and nothingnesse of all our own *Earthly enjoyments*. Onely let me desire you to take notice;

1. That *Jesus Christ* sought not his *owne things*, he *left Heaven for us, and shall not we neglect Earth for him?*

2. For

2. For what poor trifles you deſpiſe the glorious things of the Goſpel.
3. If you ſeek not after the things of Chriſt more then your owne, you are in a curſed condition, and better you had never been borne.
4. The things of Jeſus Chriſt ſhall proſper, though you ſeek not the proſperity of them. What *Mordecai* ſaid to *Eſter* in another caſe, I crave leave to ſay to you, *Enlargement and deliverance ſhall ariſe to the people of God from another place, but thou and thy Fathers houſe ſhall be deſtroyed.* There will a time come when the *Mountaine of the Lords houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the Mountaines, and ſhall be exalted above the Hills, and all Nations ſhall flow to it*; when the *Kingdomes of this world ſhall become the Kingdomes of our Lord and his Chriſt*, when the little *ſtone cuts out of the Mountaine without hands*, ſhall *deſtroy all oppoſite Kingdomes*, and become a *great Mountaine and fill the whole earth*, when every *Nation and Kingdome that will not ſerve the Lord Jeſus, ſhall periſh, and be utterly waſted.* For neglecting to ſet up this Kingdome of Chriſt, God hath deſtroyed many Nations and Kingdomes, and ſo he will us, if we follow their examples; If we *preferre the building of our owne houſes, before the building of Gods houſe, God will build up his owne houſe by other inſtruments, but he will deſtroy us and our Houſes.*

Eſter 4.14. Iſaiah 2. 2. Rev. 11. 15. Dan. 2. 35. 44, 45. Iſa. 60. 12.

3. Laſtly, Conſider: That man *ſeeks himſelfe moſt, who moſt ſeeketh the things of Chriſt.* He that is the *greateſt Chriſt-ſeeker*, is the *greateſt ſelfe-ſeeker.* For God hath ſaid, *Seek ye firſt the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.* When *Solomon* begged *wiſdome*, God gave him *wealth and riches* as an *overplus.* If we ſeek the things of Chriſt, in the *firſt* and *chiefe place*, *God* will give in *our own things* into the *bargaine*, even as *Paper and thred* is added to a *bought commodity.*

Thus I have put an end to the Sermon of ſelfe-ſeeking, Oh that I could put an end to the ſinne of ſelfe-ſeeking! Two things I dare affirme:

1. That this ſin hath been the *Originall cauſe of all Englands miſeries.*
2. That it will never be *well with England*, nor ſhall we ever ſee *better dayes*, till this *ſinne be mortified.*

Let us *goe to Chriſt*, and labour *by Faith*, to fetch power from his Death, to crucifie and mortifie this ſinne; Let it be our daily prayer, that *England may have more Chriſt-ſeekers, and fewer ſelfe-ſeekers*; or which is all one, *That God would make us all true ſelfe-ſeekers, by making us true Chriſt-ſeekers.*

FINIS.

## Errata.

Page 2. line 18. *Their owne, what.* in the marg. put into the Text, next after *their owne.* p. 3. l. 28. leave out the figure 4. and joyne the line to the foregoing. p. 7. l. 7. for *could* r. *would.* p. 9. l. 33. for *haugtineſſe* r. *naughtineſſe.* p. 17. l. 14. for *blaſphemom* r. *blaſphemers.* p. 18. l. 29 for *tvies* r. *lives:* p. 19. l. 17. for *vel amiſitia,* r. *non amiciſtia.* p. 19. l. 23. for *abhorſed,* r. *abhorred.* p. 23. l. 3. for *ruuam* r. *ruinam.* ibid l. 33. for *thy* r. *the.* p. 24. l. 36. for *would* r. *ſhould.* p. 33. l. 25. for *builing* r. *building.*